

World Environment Day

Be respectful to ...the Environment, Mother Earth and its eco-systems (biota, fauna and flora) and the universe



OM dhyaui shaanti, antariksham shaantih, prithivee shaanti, aapah shaanti, aushadhyah shaantih, vanaspatayah shaanti, vishvedevah shaanti, bramha shaantih, sarvam shaantih, shaanti eva shaantih, saamaa shaantiredhi. Om shaanti, shaanti, shaantih. (YajurVeda 36.17)

This hymn is known as the Prayer for Peace. We invoke OM, the All-Blissful Eeshvar (God) for His grace, so that *Dhyau*, the luminous objects (sun, moon & stars); *Antariksha*, the space, region between the luminous bodies and the earth; *Prithivee*, mother earth - our planet; *Aapah*, the vapours & water regions; *Aushadhyah*, the medicinal, seasonal & annual plants; *Vanaspataya*, the perennial plants; *Vishvedevaa*, learned people; *Brahma*, the Veda - mundane & spiritual sciences; *Sarvam*, all living & non-living things; *Shaanti*, the whole universe and its eco-systems give us peace. May peace be ever-flowing and ever-growing within me and within all around me (*Shaanti-Eva, Shaanti-Saa-Maa, Shaanti-Eddhi*).

O Eeshvar, Almighty God (*OM*), may we all be free (i) from miseries caused by our thoughts, words and physical actions (*Shaanti*); (ii) from miseries caused by other living beings (*Shaanti*); and (iii) miseries resulting from natural disasters (*Shaanti*).

Seeking peace from everywhere, implies a win-win situation, where we should be, first the givers of peace, then be receivers of peace.

The World Environment Day is only a reminder that we need to promote harmonious and respectful behaviours towards this bounteous life-sustaining planet we call Earth. It is a day to increase awareness about the need to maintain the natural assets, the environment (eco-systems) to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations of humanity.

It should prompt all of us towards a paradigm shift in our thoughts, speech and physical actions. Man desires to be respected; he earns respect only when he starts respecting others. Treat others like we would like to be treated also applies to the environment! Let us walk-the-talk, and be the role models for others to emulate.

Likewise, the *Shaanti Paath*, prayer for peace states that to achieve a peaceful life we need to uphold a collective responsibility to, now and always, be respectful to ...the Environment Mother Earth and its eco-systems (biota, fauna and flora) and the universe.

Acharya Bramdeo, Atlanta, GA, USA
Arya Sabha Mauritius | Greater Atlanta Vedic Temple

June 05, 2018